

An Old Parable in a New Form

THE Presbyterian Church in U. S. A. undertook to give the Gospel to one hundred million non-Christian people in twenty-eight different fields throughout the world, and counted upon the help of every one of its million and a quarter of members. It appointed a Board of Foreign Missions to direct the work and sent out its secretaries, saying, "Give and pray, for all things are now ready. The doors are open wide before us on every side. Our missionaries have gone forth and are unreservedly devoting their lives. They must be supported and adequately equipped. Therefore, Give."

And they all with one accord began to make excuse.

The first said, "I have secured a new building site. I pray thee, have me excused."

Another said, "I have bought an automobile. I pray thee, have me excused."

Another said: "I have married a wife and have all the expense I can possibly stand this year. I pray thee, have me excused."

And another said: "I am contributing not only to the support of the Church, but also to the Y. M. C. A. and the local hospital and various other institutions which affect my own interests much more than do Foreign Missions. I pray thee, have me excused."

And another said: "Our church has all it can do to maintain its own existence. I pray thee, have me excused."

And another said: "We have a debt on our new church building and we must pay that off before we

give to others; and when that is all paid for, we want a pipe organ and a manse and some other things. I pray thee, have me excused."

And another said: "There are plenty of heathen, anyhow, here at home, without sending our money to evangelize the heathen beyond the seas. I pray thee, have me excused."

So the secretaries returned and made report. And when the Lord heard, He said: "Go out again, into the homes and shops and offices and make it plain, that all the wealth with which the people have been entrusted belongs to Me and is to be used for extending My kingdom. Urge them to give so that all expenses may be met and there shall be no deficit."

And the secretaries came back and reported that the members of the Church were giving on an average only two cents a week and seemed to think that was all they

could spare. Hence there could be no extension of the work.

Then the Lord was exceeding angry and said: "These who profess to be My disciples but will not obey My Command, to give the Gospel to every creature, shall have no part in the rejoicing when the converts come from the East and the West and the North and the South to sit down at the Marriage Supper. Tell them, 'Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, My brethren, ye did it not to ME.' "

Copies can be obtained, at 50 cents a hundred (delivered) from the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York.